



THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

Growth Management Hearings Board

## PETITION TO ADOPT RULE

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014

To	From
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### PETITION TO CREATE RULE

Pursuant to RCW 34.05.330, I am requesting the agency adopt a new rule.

Growth Management Hearing Board Rule Chapter: WAC 242-03

**The purpose of this rule is to promote public transparency and increase public involvement in local planning decisions.**

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### Proposed New Rule

**The Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB) shall post a digital copy of the initial Petition for Review (PFR) on its website (<http://www.gmhb.wa.gov>) within 5 business days of the petitioner(s) being assigned an official case number.**

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### Summary

Currently, the Board makes certain information related to GMHB cases publicly available on its website: notice of hearing, preliminary schedule, pre-hearing order, date of motions, date of hearings, board members for the case, and parties to the case.

While all this information does aid public awareness and involvement in GMHB cases, something is missing: the petition for review (or PFR), which contains essential information and merits of the case. This document (already disclosable under the state's Public Records Act) is currently not posted online, while other, less critical information, is.

Making this information readily available to the public on the GMHB website would increase understanding of how the Growth Management Act works on a local level. By examining the PFRs for GMHB cases, ordinary citizens could learn more about what makes for a successful petition, and become more involved in local land-use issues.

GMHB cases and decisions play a large role in determining land use policy in Washington state. Not making PFRs publicly available after a case number has been assigned creates an unnecessary barrier for people who would like to learn more about how the GMA appeal process works.

Best of all, posting digital copies of PFRs will only incur a *de minimus* cost to taxpayers, considering the documents already exist in digital form at GMHB headquarters. All that needs to be done is for the documents (already disclosable under the state's Public Records Act) to be uploaded onto the existing GMHB "Case Details" online viewer.

This would greatly promote public transparency and increase public awareness of how the GMA appeal process functions.

I urge the board to incorporate my proposed rule into WAC 242-03.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at the number listed below if you have any question about my Petition.

Sincerely,

**Conner G. Edwards**

Property Rights Department

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